GUIDE TO THE MEI LEBANON FILE

[This file contains general and specific information on the modern republic of Lebanon. The major focus of the file is on village life in Lebanon, with nearly two-thirds of the sources devoted to this topic. Lebanon did not exist as a separate entity apart from Syria until the mid 19th century. In 1920, it declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire. It was administered under French mandate until 1941 and the republic was established in 1944, closely modeled after the structure of the French Third Republic. The population of Lebanon is 3,213,000 (1973 U. N. estimate). 55% of the population is Christian, mostly Maronites, and 45% is Moslem, with Sunnites slightly outnumbering Shiites. Arabic is the official language, but French and English are common among the educated. Trade provides two-thirds of the national income, with Syria and then other neighboring Arab states as the principal foreign commercial partners. About one half of the people are engaged in agriculture. Fruits, cereals, vegetables, and tobacco are the principal crops. Goats, sheep and cattle are also raised, and lumber (oak) is a major export. Lebanon possesses a free market economy, and is heavily dependent on foreign sources of capital.

There are 11 sources in the Lebanon file, all of them in English, and numbered 1, 7-10, 12-17. None of them offer an introductory view of the country. Seven of the sources are concerned with village life in Lebanon (7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, and 17). Three of these look at specific villages (7, 14, and 16; however, 7 and 16 are by the same author on the same village). 9 Lebanon is a survey of 8 villages in one area and contains data on population, government, land tenure and cultivation, business, industry, school, and health. Two sources discuss the problems of emigration

for Lebanon. 10: Tannous studies its effects on villages mainly in terms of the cash introduced into the village economy by emigrated members. 11: Epstein looks at emigration on a national level in terms of its demographic effects in changing the ratios of Christians and Moslems (Christians in 1946 making up the greatest percentage of emigrants). 13: Rihbany discusses municipal governments, their problems and procedures. He devotes one chapter to the government of Beirut and another to the administration of villages. 14: Tannous looks at the effects of missionary education on social change. Four more articles also discuss social change (7, 10, 16, and 17). In terms of articles dealing with other than the village, 8: Fei and Klat is a study of Lebanon's balance of payments in 1951 and 1952. 12: Churchill is a socio-economic study of Beirut. 15: Boyd is a study of blood-groups, distribution of body-hair, somatology and "taste-blindness" in Lebanon. Comparisons are made between different groups in Lebanon and also with two tribes in Syria. The data in this file are best suited for comparisons with other modernizing village economies. The file was processed between 1955 and 1956.]